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Date: December 15, 2010

To: Donna Mickley, District Ranger, Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District
Steve Johnson, Recreation Specialist
Rogue River - Siskiyou National Forest
645 Washington St., Ashland, OR 97520

From: Merdith C. Lockwood, *Trails Unlimited* (TU) Enterprise Unit

Ref: Assessment of the Mt. Ashland Watershed trails

The overall purpose of the assessment was to:

1. Ride or hike all trails and roads, or representative segments, in the Mt. Ashland Watershed.
2. Document trail conditions of legal and illegal mountain bike trails and make recommendations for changes in trail design, location, maintenance techniques, or other needs.
3. Assess the sustainability of the existing legal and illegal mountain bike trails.
4. Provide an overview of what a sustainable, maintainable and manageable mountain bike trail system would look like for the Mt. Ashland Watershed.

Although our original task was to assess the mountain bike trails since this was a controversial issue for the forest, it quickly became apparent that a workable trail system must include multiple-use trails including foot travel, cross country bike, family bike, and dog walkers in addition to mountain bikes. Our conversations with visitors on the trail as well as with community leaders made it clear that a multiple use trail system was needed.

Forest Consultation and Field Review:

On May 24—June 5, Cam Lockwood, Catherine Albers and Scott Johnson met with Steve Johnson to discuss the necessary components of a successful trails program and



began the assessment process. On October 24-29, Scott Johnson and Rick Pinson worked to complete the assessment field work. We met with several agency and private organization individuals to discuss the process of developing the existing trails and the future trail system. Over the next few months Scott and I rode our bikes or walked the entire system of trails in the watershed. We met with the local mountain bike community and individual stakeholders who have an interest in developing a sustainable trail system. We visited with users on the trails and at trailheads, and talked with dog walkers, family bike groups, runners and hikers. We also met with several City of Ashland officials, including the Mayor and his staff, who are entirely supportive of Forest Service efforts to improve trail opportunities.

We have completed the assessment that is the first step in the process of establishing a sustainable network of trails. The system we are proposing will meet the myriad needs of the community while safeguarding the resource. We also provide a strategic outline of where to go from here in order to get a sustainable trails system on the ground. The outline will help guide the users, community and Forest Service in moving forward with this project.

TU has only scratched the surface of findings and recommendations in our short visits. But, I hope we can be a partner with the Forest in developing a trail system that offers world class mountain bike opportunities as well as a foot trail system that meets the needs of all the user groups. It was our intention to not only care for the resource but also meet the needs of the public by proposing a sustainable, maintainable and manageable system for future generations. The Forest is fortunate to have an informed, supportive, fully engaged community; they will be a valuable resource in moving forward. If you would like us to make a formal presentation of our findings or would like to discuss these recommendations please don't hesitate to call me at 626-233-4309.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Meredith C. Lockwood (Cam)

MERDITH C. LOCKWOOD, *Trails Unlimited*
USDA Forest Service, WO Enterprise Program

Attachment: *Trails Unlimited*, Trail Assessment
Excel Spreadsheet of trails